

Kentucky Literacy Link

A Publication of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

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Volume 4, Issue 9

April 2014

Reconciling Belief and Practice

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In her article, "[Provocative Questions That Animate My Thinking about Teaching](#)", Michelle

Commeyras poses five questions to better align teaching practices and beliefs:

1. Do I believe that as a teacher I am an intellectual?
2. Do I believe that as a teacher I am political?
3. Do I believe society has made me something that I no longer want to be?
4. Do I believe reading requires attending to the political, social, and historical context of a text?
5. Do I believe education always presupposes vision of the future?

I could talk about all of those

questions – and I just might in future issues – but today I want to address the fifth. Must teachers – not administrators, state departments, university faculties, educational standards boards, etc., but teachers – have a vision for education?

I say yes. We didn't get into this field because we wanted to do harm. We want to make the world a better place; we want to make the educational system a better organism. We believe in the power of education. We have hope for the future.

Hope without vision, however, is futile. What does this better world look like to you? What do you want for your students, for all students? When you can envision the answers to such questions you can better imagine your role in bringing about the changes you seek.

If you have a vision, you can analyze your practice and, if you're honest, figure out if you're walking your talk. If you say you believe all students can succeed, but you don't require much of Johnny as long as he's quiet, are you living up to your vision? If you say you believe in the craft of teaching, but you aren't seeking to improve your craft, are you being true to your vision?

Take some time today to think about why you became a teacher. What did you see with your young, bright eyes when you walked into your first school? Has your vision become clouded over the years? And, if so, what are you going to do about it?

Keep learning, keep growing, and keep envisioning a bright future for the children of Kentucky!



Kentucky Department of Education Updates

KDE Revised Consolidated Compliance Plan for Non-Discrimination Available

Please be advised that the KDE has revised its Consolidated Compliance Plan for Non-Discrimination. The revised plan has been posted on the Legal and Legislative Services [page](#) on KDE's website and includes a Discrimination Complaint Form that can be filled out by anyone alleging discrimination against KDE staff and/or KDE program areas.

Best Practices Website Improved

Are you baffled about what you can do to improve student learning, achievement or district operations? The Kentucky Department of Education's [Best Practices web-](#)

[site](#) may hold the answer. It is designed as a clearinghouse for best and promising practices that motivate, engage, and provide [measurable results](#) in student learning, achievement and school/district processes – any aspect of a school system that can impact student outcomes through improved instruction or operations.

A recent redesign has resulted in a Best Practices website that is easier to use and navigate. A more thorough search tool now allows users to set multiple parameters to search for and locate a practice that may be of benefit. Best practices are categorized based on the Kentucky AdvancED Standards.

A more user-friendly application makes it easy to submit a best practice for consideration and simply doing so could make your best practice even better! A panel of subject matter experts will review and, based on a rubric, score each submission, and offer suggestions on how to strengthen it. Feedback will be provided to applicants via e-mail. Accepted best practices will be added to the website. KDE periodically recognizes and celebrates successful applicants for their submissions.

So, whether you are submitting a best practice or searching for one, be sure to take advantage of this powerful tool.



Spotlight: Kentucky Teacher Shares Her New Book

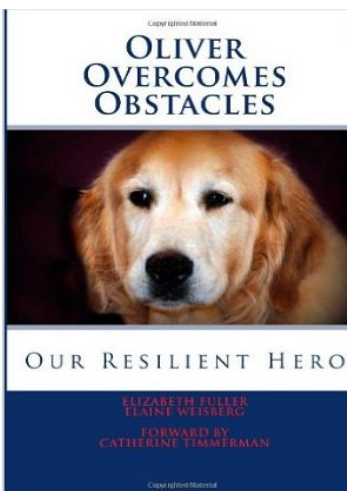
Beth Fuller is a goal clarity coach at Carter Traditional

Elementary School in Jefferson County. Prior to that she taught at Atkinson Elementary for 10 years, teaching in a demonstration site classroom for the last five years and helping to start demonstration sites for all of JCPS. She worked with struggling third graders and sought creative ways to get them engaged in reading. One program she started was the Ruff Ruff Reader Program where Oliver would come and listen to students read. Students were motivated to become better readers – working hard between his visits because they wanted to be better for him, as well as themselves.

Founded in 2003, [Paws with Purpose](#) is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization that provides Assistance Dogs as partners to children and adults with physical disabilities or other special needs. These dogs provide comfort and companionship, help to break down social barriers, and perform many skilled tasks which help their partners lead more independent lives. Paws with Purpose relies on donors and fundraisers to provide these highly skilled service dogs at no charge to the recipients. Paws with Purpose also provides assistance dogs at several hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and various other events and places throughout the Louisville area.

Several years ago I decided that I really wanted to have a reading dog in my classroom. I contacted Elaine Weisberg, vice president at Paws with Purpose to see if their organization had such a program. She told me that they didn't but, after much persuasion, she agreed to try it out with me.

She brought her therapy dog, Oliver, to my third grade demonstration site classroom at Atkinson Academy to read with some of my most struggling students. Oliver served as a



nonjudgmental reading partner and motivated my students to want to become better readers. Oliver completely changed my classroom and inspired me to strive to grow this program.

Today there are several Paws with Purpose dogs traveling to schools in Jefferson and Oldham counties to listen to students read. I've had reading dogs in my classroom ever since, including Oliver and his friends. The dogs have started coming over to my new school (Carter Elementary) as well.

Oliver is so special to me. One thing I love about Oliver is that he has been through many struggles in his life. I would always start by telling the students Oliver's story. Oliver truly is an example of resiliency and is a hero to anyone who reads about his life.

Many students can identify with Oliver's experiences. He had been in many homes and had a sense of not feeling "wanted" early in his life. He also struggled to learn tasks.

He failed at being a service dog but used this failure to become a therapy dog and to find his purpose in life.

Elaine and I talked repeatedly about how much we loved Oliver and how we loved telling his story, so I decided we should write a book about him. Elaine would tell me or write down some of Oliver's stories and I would put them into kid-friendly language. I strategically added in details to highlight Oliver's resiliency.

Soon I compiled the book and we chose some of Oliver's best pictures to illustrate it. It was truly a team effort. *Oliver Overcomes Obstacles: Our Resilient Hero* is the story of Oliver's life and struggles and how he became a therapy dog who spends his life helping others.

Cat Timmerman, PhD, (currently a fifth grade teacher at Shelby Elementary in Jefferson county) felt a special connection with Oliver when he would come visit Atkinson. Oliver would stop by her room to visit her and bring joy to Cat and her students. She was the perfect person to write the forward to the book because she was one of the people who Oliver helped.

Since I met Oliver and some of the other Paws with Purpose dogs, I became very involved in the work of the organization. I now volunteer on the Board of Directors. Elaine and I originally wrote this book thinking we would share it mostly with the students who read with Oliver, but we realized we could also sell the book as a way to raise money for Paws with Purpose. All proceeds from the book go to the organization. It is available locally at Carmichael's bookstore or via [Amazon](#).

Kentucky Reading Association Fall Conference

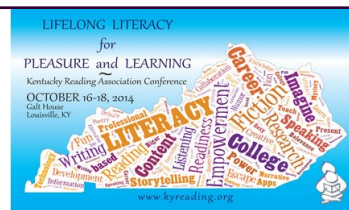
The lineup of speakers for the Kentucky Reading Association Conference has been released. The event, to be held October 16-18, 2014, at the Galt House in Louisville, will once again feature nationally renowned literacy experts. The list includes Doug Fisher, Linda Gambrell, Shane Templeton, Jennifer Turner, and Jeff Wilhelm. The conference theme is "Lifelong

Literacy for Pleasure and Learning." More information may be found [here](#).

KRA is very interested in your voice and participation. You are invited to become a member of the organization, which focuses on literacy as a profession and an important aspect of everyday living. KRA is undergoing a facelift to help bring it into the

21st century, including better communication with its constituency. Please, continue to visit the website over the next few months to learn more about the organization and view its transformation. KRA's mission is to be a "voice for literacy," and that voice resonates from it's members – you!

You may access the online pro-



posal submission form [here](#). Proposals are due by **June 27, 2014**. Additional details are included on the Call for Proposal form. Contact conference chair [Peggy Stirsman](#) with questions.

Not Your Mother's Vocabulary List

[Mary Rudd](#) has extensive experience as an educator, serving students and schools in many roles. After 13 years as a high school English teacher and motivated to give teachers a greater voice in decision making and planning for improvement, she became an assistant middle and high school principal at Eminence (Kentucky) Independent. She went on to positions as middle and high school curriculum director in the Boyle County (Kentucky) Schools, as a KDE Highly Skilled Educator supporting schools in Jefferson and LaRue counties, and later, implementing KDE's professional development on the Striving Readers 2 adolescent literacy federal grant.

The [Collaborative for Teaching and Learning \(CTL\)](#) is a non-profit organization that works with educators to improve instruction and increase learning for all students. Their staff of veteran educators provides services including professional development, leadership development, technical assistance, data collection and analysis, program evaluation, and classroom technology integration. They work directly with schools and districts, and in partnership with state and local education agencies, colleges and universities, foundations, and other non-profit organizations. CTL's mission is to advance excellence in teaching and school leadership.

In the previously published blog titled, [Teaching Critical Vocabulary](#), I outlined a simple way of thinking about changing the way teachers traditionally approach vocabulary instruction in all content areas, starting with careful selection of words with which students will work in each class.

There are many excellent [online resources](#) offering specific [vocabulary strategies](#) that meaningfully engage students once those words are selected. Specific content-related information can be found on professional

[sites and blogs](#), while many sources outline [Marzano's six steps for teaching new terms](#). For the teacher who has not yet moved beyond isolated strategy implementation, here are some [not-so-out-of-the-box questions](#) to consider once you have selected the terms which are most critical to students' knowledge and application of content. You might notice that vocabulary instruction looks much like regular instruction, except there is time built in for **word talk**.

- How can you use multiple types of text, images, videos, audio, scenarios, or movement to engage students in peer discussion about a concept that you are teaching?

Example: In teaching basic energy consumption information, you might ask students to pair and brainstorm ways that they consume energy each day, rating the ones they use the most. Then engage them in watching a video or analyzing a scenario as a group to look for energy sources and consumption they hadn't thought about, and have them add to their list. You might introduce a layer of knowledge here, such as forms of energy and sources. Put students in charge of the discussion about energy consumption rather than you leading it. Once they are into the subject, ask them to define it in their own words and to complete a list of questions they have about the topic.

- As students work through an engaging question or investigation, how can you facilitate academic dialogue that deepens their content understanding?

Students' questions will take them into many aspects of the topic, including personal application. They might work through lessons on how reading meters, analyzing ener-

gy guides, and measuring effectiveness of heating and cooling systems can impact energy decisions. They might wonder, more globally, how the video game explosion has affected energy consumption. As they work through their questions, have them monitor their vocabulary learning in a simple format by listing related words into "I need to learn more about this word" to "I know what this word means". Allow them to discuss and help each other move their words into the "I know" column. Use this information as formative assessment and discuss their thoughts with them.

- How can you apply brain research to maximize class time spent on vocabulary?

One way is to have students cluster related words to maximize the brain's need to make meaning of new learning, and allow common words to mix with more challenging ones. While learning about energy consumption, for example, students will no doubt build on and between the meanings of terms like *meter*, *insulation*, *electricity*, *coal*, *natural gas*, *ceiling fan*, *thermostat*, and *maintenance*.

[Self-created lists of challenging words, as science teacher Sheila Banks demonstrates](#), motivate students to drive their learning. Pair students so that they can expand their cluster of words and explain their rationale for including certain words in their bundle.

Simply stated, the more teachers view vocabulary learning as an integral part of content learning rather than as an extra, isolated step in instruction, the more effectively their students will be able to use the language of the discipline.

Librarians Encourage Love of Reading with Blind Book Dates

Librarians [Janelle Hawes](#) at Lloyd High School in Erlanger-Elsmere Independent district and [Carol Cave](#) at Lexington Christian Academy spread the love this February by setting their students up on blind dates...with books. Students reflected on the experience by rating their date with a [form](#) designed by Cave. Students were admonished that their ratings could save someone else from a bad experience or give them the opportunity for a great one. Among other



things, they have to tell how the book was and whether they would read a book like it again.

The librarians covered the books with festive pink and red paper and allowed the students to check books out based only on the genre and a few words of topical information. If students returned the rating form, their name was submitted for a drawing. The prizes include various gift cards. At Lloyd, students and staff who tweeted about their books were also included in the drawings.

Tier Two Vocabulary: A Hidden Piece of the Vocabulary Puzzle

"If you do not know the words, you can hardly know the thing." Although true of any content area, this statement by Henry Hazlitt holds particular importance for CTE teachers. The text complexity of CTE texts requires regular, explicit vocabulary instruction. However, there is a hidden piece of the vocabulary puzzle that can increase student comprehension and ultimately, the goal of applying that knowledge in the lab or workplace settings.

So, will simply assigning more vocabulary words achieve that goal? Probably not. Appendix A of the Common Core Academic Standards emphasizes the need for incremental, repeated exposure to a variety of contexts to the words they are trying to learn. But will simply learning the content vocabulary deepen student understanding? Again, probably not. Appendix A provides insight by categorizing vocabulary into three tiers. Rather than a hierarchy of importance, the tiers represent how these words are acquired and the amount of effort required in their acquisition. Understanding these tiers can help plan effective instruction.

- **Tier One words** are the words of everyday speech and are normally learned in the early grades.
- **Tier Two words**, often referred to as *general academic* words, are more likely to appear in texts than in speech. Found in all content areas, they often

represent subtle, precise ways to say relatively simple things. Words commonly found in technical texts might include *relative*, *multiple*, *rotate*, *vertical*, *graduated*, *diameter*, etc. According to David Liben, tier two words can carry a disproportionate weight in conveying the meaning of a text, and a reader who does not understand even *a single such word* might have his or her comprehension thrown off track.

- **Tier Three words** are specific to a content area, e.g., *lathe*, *broker*, *dentition*, *commutator*, and *tungsten*. They are commonly defined explicitly in the text or glossary.

Teachers typically define tier three words prior to encountering them in a text and reinforce them frequently throughout a lesson. Because tier two words are not unique to a specific discipline, teachers often overlook this support for students. In addition, tier two words are typically difficult to understand by using context clues and texts rarely provide clear explanations.

So where do you begin instruction of tier two words? The first step is to recognize and develop an awareness of the key role these words play in texts. Asking questions such as:

- What are the tier two words in this text?
- What variations may students find (e.g.

divide, *dividers*, *dividing*)?

- What are the shades of meaning of this word?
- Does this word have multiple meanings (e.g. *to support* (verb) or *a support* (noun))?
- How critical is this word to understanding the text?
- What words will cause the most difficulty for my students?



Once you have identified these hidden pieces of the vocabulary puzzle, purposely incorporate them into instruction. Provide students with multiple opportunities to use and respond to the words through informal classroom and lab discussions, reading, and responding to what they read. Creating intentional encounters over time leads to significantly greater gains in achievement, and will ultimately increase students' performance in the lab or workplace setting.

To learn more about Tier Two words and assist you in planning, check out: [Appendix A of the Common Core Academic Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#)
[Which Words Do I Teach and How?](#)
[Instructional Guide for General Academic Vocabulary](#)

Technology Critique: Fluency Tutor

[Abbey Buckman](#) teaches seventh grade at East Oldham Middle School.

[Fluency Tutor](#) is a program designed to foster growth in specific areas of the five reading strands, namely fluency. However, unlike the name suggests, Fluency Tutor also measures comprehension, although it is not highlighted nearly as much as student growth of accuracy, speed, and prosody.

Fluency Tutor is intended for elementary and secondary students. The program has students progress through tiered literary and informational passages. It includes modeled reading of the texts, dictionary references to new vocabulary, and students recording themselves on practice and assessments. Teachers or other adults evaluate student fluency after listening to recordings and give feedback before students move on

to the next level. Reading passages are marked as elementary and secondary and categorized by Lexile, reading age, automated readability index, and the Flesch-Kincaid grade level. These categories make it easy to assign appropriate passages to students.

Although this program should never replace teacher instruction, it is a nice way to assess students on fluency. I use Fluency Tutor for my Tier II Response to Intervention groups. Before we purchased this program I would ask students to bring their smart technology to record themselves and listen to their reading while reflecting on their fluency. This caused problems when I wanted to hear their recordings. Students deleted readings, or the sound was hard to hear, or we had issues acquiring the right technology to begin with. Fluency Tutor allows me to assess students easily and to access a data-

base of their progress in one location.

One downside is that there is a fee to purchase licenses; however, it may be a good school investment for a principal. Although there are a limited number of students who can use this program, all students who use this program at school can also log in at home. Additional drawbacks are that the teacher evaluations take time., voice that reads aloud the passages is very monotone (students often skip that part and do a dry reading). Even though it could be a more interactive, my students have expressed eagerness all year in reading with this program. Whether it's due to the microphones and headphones that they love to put on, the fact that it's on the computer, they can track their progress easily, or all of the above, my students have shown great interest in reading through Fluency Tutor.

Upcoming Literacy Events Around Kentucky



Youth Storytelling Competition

Entries are now being accepted for the Kentucky Youth Storytelling (KYS) competition open to youth ages 8-17 at entry deadline June 1. Entrants must submit a 7-11 minute story on DVD no later than June 1 of each year. Winners will receive a cash prize of \$100; a plaque designating them as a Kentucky Torchbearer; one year free membership in KYS; recognition and an opportunity to tell their story onstage at the Kentucky Storytelling Conference in November and other events. Up to five winners may be selected.

Rules, judging guidelines, entry form and permission slip can be found [here](#) or on the Kentucky Storytelling Association [website](#). Contact KYS Chair [Gwenda Huff-Johnson](#) for more information.

Kentucky Center Academies for Arts Integration

The Kentucky Department of Education, in partnership with the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts, and KET, will present four Kentucky Center Academies for Arts Integration for teachers in July 2014:

- (July 7-11) **Frankfort:** Academy for Integration of the Arts, Social Studies, and Creative Writing, with an arts-integrated field trip to the Governor's Mansion which celebrates its Centennial this year. The faculty are Judy Sizemore, Roger Thomas, and Jane Dewey.
- **Murray:** Arts Academy (Music, Dance, and Visual Arts) with Jennifer Rose and Alfredo Escobar.
- (July 14-18) **Manchester (Clay County):** Academy for Integration of the Arts & World Languages (French, Spanish, and German). Faculty to be announced at a later time.

- (July 25-August 1) **Bowling Green:** Academy for Integration of the Arts & World Languages (Mandarin Chinese). Faculty to be announced at a later time.

All four academies will take place on Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Teachers are expected to attend all five days. Each Academy will accept up to 30 teachers. Teams of two teachers (one arts teacher and one non-arts teacher) are encouraged to apply. We will try to serve as many districts as we can, so it is unlikely that more than two teachers per school will be selected. All teachers applying must be certified full-time teachers in Kentucky public schools, except for World Language teachers (who must teach in Kentucky schools, public or private). Only arts teachers may apply for more than one academy.

Teachers attending the academies will receive hands-on, standards-aligned training and a \$500 stipend (\$100 per day). Teachers may elect to receive PD credit as approved by their districts (6 hours per day) instead of stipends for some of these days. We do not have funding to cover transportation or lodging.

Applications must be submitted electronically by April 11, 2014. For further information and the online application, click [here](#). For additional questions, please contact [Jeffrey Jamner](#).

Scijourn Summer Workshops

The Kentucky Writing Project and the Kentucky Department of Education present two Summer 2014 workshops on Science Literacy through Science Journalism. This three-day workshop will support you in engaging students in meeting the new Common Core Standards for research through the [Scijourn](#)

process. Based on a four-year NSF-funded research project demonstrating that teaching science journalism using reliable data sources and science-specific writing standards improves students' understanding of and literate engagement in science. Click [here](#) for more information.

Kentucky Writer's Day

The Kentucky Arts Council has released the 2014 Kentucky Writers' Day Planning Guide to help schools, businesses and other community organizations plan their own celebrations to commemorate Kentucky writers. The planning guide, separated by organization type, includes lists of helpful suggestions and creative ways to mark the day and recognize some of Kentucky's finest literary artists.

Kentucky Writers' Day is April 24 and will be celebrated state-wide by schools, libraries, writers' groups, businesses, senior citizens' centers and more. The Kentucky General Assembly established Kentucky Writers' Day in 1990 to honor Kentucky's strong literary tradition and to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Kentucky native Robert Penn Warren, the first poet laureate of the United States and winner of three Pulitzer prizes.

The arts council will host a Kentucky Writers' Day Ceremony at 10 a.m. April 24 in the Capitol Rotunda with a public reception to follow on the Mezzanine. The celebration will include readings by the Kentucky Poet Laureate and past poets laureate.

For more information about Kentucky Writers' Day, click [here](#).

Fizz, Boom, Read! Summer Reading Theme Connects to Science

[Kathy Mansfield](#) is KDE's Library Media/Textbooks Consultant.

Once again, librarians will be challenged to participate in MetaMetrics' "Pledge to Read." Possible incentives include one-year licenses for reading programs from Scholastic, Achieve3000, and Capstone Digital. Kentucky was number one in the nation for Summer 2012 in pledges to read, and I hope

we can reach that same achievement for Summer 2014. The Summer Reading theme for most of the state's public libraries this year is "Fizz, Boom, Read!" (science theme), which ties in great with our [new science standards](#)! The Louisville Free Public Library is using the theme "Read Big."

Be sure to check with your local public library about their theme for Summer Read-

ing. Although the majority will use "Fizz, Boom, Read!", a few will use other themes. Flyers are available for [teachers](#), [librarians](#), [English-speaking parents](#) and [Spanish-speaking parents](#). Look for more information about how to support Summer Reading Programs and how to participate in the "2014 Pledge to Read" in April and May, and visit KDE's [Summer Reading webpage](#) for additional resources.

New Voices Young Playwrights Festival



Artistic Director Les Waters and Managing Director Jennifer Bielstein are pleased to announce the New Voices Young Playwrights Festival, a fully produced evening of new ten-minute plays written by students throughout the region and presented by Actors Education and the 2013-2014 Apprentice/Intern Company. The New Voices Young Playwrights Festival runs April 21-22 at 7 p.m. in the Bingham Theatre. Tickets are free and can be reserved by calling (502) 584-1205. Limit six tickets per household.

"It is our responsibility as a leading arts organization to foster an environment in which young people can explore and create art," said Les Waters, Artistic Director. "The New Voices Young Playwrights Festival allows students to collaborate with theatre professionals and see their work come to life on our stage. Actors Theatre is so very proud to share these new voices and be involved in their artistic development."

This year's festival showcases nine ten-minute plays written by local young playwrights. The evening will feature, amongst

other things, a sensitive iPhone, an out of control cabbage contest, a potentially dangerous study session, a small-town superhero, a snarky elfen warrior, a high-stakes heart to heart on a tree limb, a town encased by an ancient wall, a space-obsessed girl with a unique view of the universe, and a group of princesses in need of some serious therapy.

The nine winning plays to be performed during the festival were chosen from more than 550 entries written through New Voices Playwriting Residencies and independently. The selected playwrights for this year's festival represent seven schools in Jefferson County, Kentucky and Floyd County, Indiana. The plays include:

- Misfortune by Nakoma Ehrhart (duPont Manual High School), Louisville, Ky.
- Pieces by Hannah Rose Marks (Assumption High School), Louisville, Ky.
- Cabbaged CRAZED by Mark McDaniel

(Ballard High School), Louisville, Ky.

- Piece by Piece by Saide Martinez (Floyd Central High School), Floyds Knobs, Ind.
- Space-Girl by Emma Morris (Atherton High School), Louisville, Ky.
- Greg's New Phone by Travis Ryan (duPont Manual High School), Louisville, Ky.
- Because I Knew You by Annie Stone (Youth Performing Arts School), Louisville, Ky.
- Can We Just Kill the Bad Guy Already? by Hallianda Williams (Fairdale High School), Louisville, Ky.
- What Not to Wed by Madisen Zirnheld (Male High School), Louisville, Ky.

The New Voices Young Playwrights Festival is made possible through the support of LG&E and KU Energy, Kentucky Arts Council, Fund for the Arts and the Horseshoe Foundation of Floyd County. To view the complete press release, click [here](#).

Engaging Families: Parent Leadership Training Opportunities

Governor's Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership (GCIPL) will conduct four regional institutes in Kentucky this fall: Eastern Kentucky, Northern Kentucky, Louisville and the service region of the Partners for Education at Berea College.

Please think about parents, community members, guardians, involved grandparents and family members, mentors and other

adults who advocate for students in public schools -- people you feel would benefit from great training on Kentucky's education and accountability system and how to partner with schools to impact achievement. Graduates of the training will receive support, coaching and a



mini-grant to implement a project in a public school to involve other parents in improving student achievement. Funders have designated counties and districts in which the participants must live and conduct their projects. Institute dates, locations and further information, as well as the GCIPL application, can be found

[here](#).

If there is no institute scheduled in your area, the GCIPL can come to you.

For more information on the workshops or a training consultation, contact Molly Toney at (859) 233-9849, ext. 226, or via e-mail at mtoney@prichardcommittee.org.

In Support of the Kentucky Core Academic Standards

On March 13, KDE Commissioner Holliday, along with KEA president Stephanie Winkler, and KY Chamber of Commerce President Dave Atkisson testified before the Senate Education Committee on SB 224, which would do away with the Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS) and send us back to the drawing board to develop new standards. Commissioner Terry Holliday has repeatedly argued

that this would be a waste of time, effort and money and a setback for our students and teachers alike. While the committee did not vote on the bill, it is important that we continue spreading accurate information in support of the KCAS (Common Core State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics and Next-Generation Science Standards) and continuing to move forward with them.

Below you will find some such resources – Kentucky teacher voices who speak out in favor of the Common Core State Standards.

VIDEO: [Why are higher standards important for students and teachers in the classroom?](#)
VIDEO: [Why do teachers need to help students meet the higher standards?](#)
VIDEO: [What would you say to](#)

[a critic of the common core?](#)
VIDEO: [Why are assessments in the classroom important for teachers and students?](#)

Please share these broadly through various communication channels with your parents, students, communities—anyone who wants to see Kentucky continuing to move forward and supports more students graduating college/career-ready.

Nominations Open for 2015 Kentucky Teacher Awards

Nominations are now open for the 2015 Kentucky Teacher Awards, sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education and Ashland Inc.

Nominations may be submitted electronically by visiting the [2015 Kentucky Teacher of the Year website](#). The deadline for nominations is May 15. Any full-time public school teacher in the state with at least three years of experience is eligible. Additional qualifications are cited on the [application](#). Teachers may be nominated by students, parents, teaching peers, principals or superintendents or anyone from the community who has an interest in honoring an outstanding educator.

All nominated teachers are required to

complete a formal application, which must be submitted by June 30. Judging will take place in August by a blue ribbon panel of education professionals from around the state, and up to 24 Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Award winners will be announced in September. Following site visits with nine semifinalists in September and personal interviews with the top three candidates, the Kentucky Teacher of the Year will be announced in Frankfort.

At that time, all 24 teachers will be honored with cash awards and other mementos. Teacher Achievement Award winners will receive a cash gift of \$500; two of the three finalists will receive a cash gift of \$3,000; and the Teacher of the Year will receive a cash prize of \$10,000, along with an exciting

professional development opportunity. The Kentucky Teacher of the Year then will represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year competition.

The Kentucky Teacher Awards program combines the best elements of the Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Awards and the Kentucky Teacher of the Year programs. This is the 14th year for this innovative collaboration between private industry and public education.



Kentucky
TEACHER OF THE YEAR

PD 360: Resources to Support KCAS and PGES



Two LumiBooks are available in [PD360 to help with Kentucky Core Academic Standards implementation](#). The first book is [Pathway to Common Core Success](#) by Lisa Leith. This LumiBook includes videos and provides guidance for educators who are transitioning to and sustaining a standards-based foundation for teaching and learning in the 21st century.

The second book is [Core Learning: Assessing What Matters Most](#) by Jay McTighe. This LumiBook includes great downloads and

contains three main ideas:

1. Assessment should focus on the educational outcomes that matter most -- not just those things that are easiest to test and quantify.
2. Student motivation and quality of learning will be enhanced when subject matter is framed around authentic tasks.
3. Classroom assessments should be conceived and used primarily to provide ongoing feedback for improvement, not as the basis

for grading.

Pathway to Common Core Success aligns to Component 1A (Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy) and *Core Learning: Assessing What Matters Most* aligns to Component 3D (Using Assessment in Instruction) in the [Framework for Teaching](#).

[Resource: Peer Guidance for Student Misconceptions](#)
In this Common Core360 video, [Peer Guidance for Student Misconceptions](#), Ms. Shannon

Washburn, a 4th grade teacher, engages her class in peer guidance for student misconceptions. Students defend or argue each other's point-of-view. The children are encouraged to both explain and demonstrate their reasoning to the class. This interaction of students connects to Component 3B - Questioning and Discussion Techniques and Component 3D - Using Assessment in Instruction in the [Framework for Teaching](#).

New Resource from the Literacy Design Collaborative



Since the launch of [LDC CoreTools](#) and the new website in January, the Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) has continued to enhance their tools and resources to make the LDC workflow even more efficient and easy

to use. If you haven't yet joined LDC CoreTools, sign up and get started. It's free!

With spring approaching, LDC's thoughts turn to helping teachers improve student outcomes over the final months of the

school year. To that end, they've announced the debut of the [LDC Blog](#) — a resource to keep you in the know with LDC news and tools you can use to make a difference in your classroom.

K-3 Program Review Implementation Support Modules Now Available

The Kentucky Department of Education is pleased to announce a new **free** resource available to schools and districts offering guidance on the effective implementation of the K-3 Program Review. In collaboration with Kentucky Educational Television (KET), three online modules have been developed

with video examples illustrating practices in Kentucky K-3 programs that support the Standards, Demonstrators, and Characteristics found in the K-3 Program Review, including the demonstrator around Kentucky Systems of Intervention/Response to Intervention. These modules will lead a school's

Program Review team through personal reflection and refinement of their process as a whole. Access the modules at: <http://www.pbs.org/teacherline/>. They are available under the 'Leadership' heading.



Help

Your contributions of ideas and lessons that work are welcome. E-mail mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov to submit. Your submissions may be included in the Literacy Link to help connect teachers across the state by sharing ideas, insights and best practices.

Access this and past Literacy Links on KDE's website: [Click Here](#)



If you have questions or concerns, we want to help. Contact:

- Cindy Parker – Literacy Coordinator – cindy.parker@education.ky.gov
- Kelly Clark – Literacy Consultant – kelly.clark@education.ky.gov
- Jackie Rogers – Literacy Consultant – jackie.rogers@education.ky.gov
- Teresa Rogers – Literacy Consultant – teresa.rogers@education.ky.gov
- Pamela Wininger – Literacy Consultant – pamela.wininger@education.ky.gov
- MK Overstreet – Literacy Consultant – mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov
- Kathy Mansfield– Library Media/Textbooks Consultant – kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov



Feedback from the Field

Your feedback helps us to tailor the Link to best meet the needs of teachers. Tell us how you're using it. Tell us what you want to see more or less of. We want to hear from you! E-mail [MK Overstreet](mailto:MK.Overstreet).

"Thank you for the wonderful summary of the conference. I am so glad

you learned and enjoyed so many concepts."

–Bonnie

"I have enjoyed your recent inclusion of articles related to school librarians. They are truly an underappreciated untapped resource in our schools. My librarian is the person who first

shared the Literacy Link with me! Keep it up!"

–Christy T.

"You always share resources I've never used. Thank you!"

–Tom S.



Additional Reading and Other Resources

- Apply for the Jan Stauber Grant: The grant's mission is to provide needed financial assistance to persons and organizations developing literacy programs and other educational experiences that will introduce young people to Sherlock Holmes. Learn more [here](#).
- Beyond the Classroom: MetaMetrics was asked to submit an article to the American Association of School Librarians for publication in their journal, *Knowledge Quest*. The article, entitled [Beyond the Classroom](#), highlights the importance and role of librarians in preparing students for college and career readiness. It includes some contributions from KY librarians discussing how they have incorporated the Lexile Framework for Reading into their library programs.
- Kentucky includes a local and a state contribution for Student Growth in the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES). Learn more on KDE's [student growth webpage](#).
- [Newsela](#) is an innovative way for students to build reading comprehension with nonfiction that's always relevant: daily news. Newsela automatically gives each student the version of an article that's just right for his or her reading ability. And an easier or harder version of each article is just a click away. Articles are accompanied by quizzes to provide quick and powerful feedback. You'll always know whether your students are on track and where they're falling short. Newsela makes it easy to assign articles, review student quizzes and track mastery.
- [CoreStandards.org](#) has taken on a new appearance. The site has been refreshed in order to make it easier for all visitors — including parents, educators and policymakers — to obtain clear and accurate information about the Common Core. The refreshed version of [CoreStandards.org](#) includes an introductory video to the standards, a section specifically for parents and a dynamic state map that directs visitors to information about the implementation efforts currently underway in each state.
- In his webinar, *Comprehension - Going Beyond Fluency*, Dr. Timothy Rasinski answered questions such as:
 1. Would you focus on morphology with struggling 1st graders?
 2. Is there a particular age that Latin and Greek word endings should be taught? Is 1st and 2nd too young? Can you teach it with phonics? Click this [link](#) to hear the answers to these questions (and more!). This is a [link](#) to the presentation slides.

